

By: Senator(s) Smith

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2485

1 AN ACT ENTITLED THE "MISSISSIPPI READING SUFFICIENCY ACT OF
2 2003; TO REQUIRE EACH STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE 3RD AND 4TH GRADES
3 TO BE ASSESSED FOR THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS, AND TO
4 REQUIRE A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR THOSE FOUND NOT TO BE READING
5 AT THE APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL; TO PRESCRIBE THE COMPONENTS OF THE
6 PLAN, TO PROVIDE FOR SCHOOL READING ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES, TO
7 PROVIDE FOR TUTORING AND TO PROVIDE THAT COPIES OF THE ASSESSMENT
8 SHALL BE MADE PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD OF EACH STUDENT; AND
9 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
12 "Mississippi Reading Sufficiency Act of 2003."

13 **SECTION 2.** The purpose of the Mississippi Reading
14 Sufficiency Act is to ensure that each child attains the necessary
15 reading skills by completion of the Fourth Grade which will enable
16 that student to continue development of reading skills and to
17 succeed throughout school and life.

18 **SECTION 3.** (1) Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year,
19 each student enrolled in Third and Fourth Grades of the public
20 schools of this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going
21 assessments for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade
22 level in which that student is enrolled. Before the close of the
23 current school year, any student, except for students who are on
24 an individualized education program or have limited English
25 proficiency, found not to be reading at the appropriate grade
26 level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which will
27 include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the
28 student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills.
29 The plan shall include, but not be limited to:



30 (a) Sufficient additional in-school instructional time
31 for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the
32 student;

33 (b) If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular
34 school hours, on Saturdays and during summer; and

35 (c) Utilization of teaching methodologies, including
36 phonics and other methodologies in wide practice, as is determined
37 appropriate by the reading assessment committee.

38 The student shall be reassessed at the conclusion of the
39 program of instruction. The program of instruction shall continue
40 until the student is determined to be reading at or above grade
41 level. The student may continue to progress to the next grade
42 level while the tutorial reading instruction continues.

43 (2) Each school site shall establish a committee composed of
44 educators, which if possible shall include a certified reading
45 specialist, to determine the reading assessment plan for each
46 student for whom one is necessary. A parent or guardian of the
47 student shall be included in the development of the reading
48 assessment plan for that student. Every school district shall
49 adopt and annually update a district plan which includes a plan
50 for each site and which outlines how each school site will comply
51 with the provisions of the Mississippi Reading Sufficiency Act.

52 (3) For any Fourth Grade student not reading at that grade
53 level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally
54 recognized reading assessment given mid-year, a new reading
55 assessment plan shall be developed as specified in this section
56 and implemented. In addition to other requirements of this act,
57 the plan shall include specialized tutoring and may include a
58 recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the
59 Fourth Grade at the close of that year.

60 (4) Copies of the results of the assessment administered
61 pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be made a part of
62 the permanent record of each student until the student is reading



63 on grade level so that the results of the next grade level
64 assessment can be measured against the previous grade level
65 results.

66 **SECTION 4.** Pursuant to appropriation by the Legislature
67 specifically for such purpose, the State Department of Education
68 shall provide in-service training, computer software and certified
69 reading instructor personnel for training local school district
70 certificated personnel to assist students and otherwise implement
71 the provisions of this act.

72 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
73 and after July 1, 2003.

